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## Patrick AFB Newsletter for Military Retirees

Volume xxxii, No. 2

45 SW/SWRP 36-2

June 2014

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*"The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by our nation."*

**-- George Washington**

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### **Social Security Announces New Expedited Disability Process for Veterans:**

Social Security unveiled a new initiative to expedite disability claims by veterans with a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation rating of 100% Permanent & Total (P&T). Under the new process, Social Security will treat these veterans' applications as high priority and issue expedited decisions, similar to the way the agency currently handles disability claims from Wounded Warriors.

Social Security worked with Veterans Affairs to identify those veterans with disabilities who have a high probability of also meeting our definition of disability.

In order to receive the expedited service, veterans must tell Social Security they have a VA disability compensation rating of 100% P&T and show proof of their disability rating with their VA Notification Letter.

The VA rating only expedites Social Security disability claims processing and does not guarantee an approval for Social Security disability benefits. These veterans must still meet the strict eligibility requirements for a disability allowance.

Social Security plans to launch the expedited process in mid-March.

For information about this service, please visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/pgm/disability-pt.htm](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pgm/disability-pt.htm)  
<<http://www.ssa.gov/pgm/disability-pt.htm>

For more about Social Security's handling of Wounded Warrior's disability claims, please visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/woundedwarriors](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/woundedwarriors) <<http://www.ssa.gov/woundedwarriors>

SOURCE: VA Press Release at <http://www.ssa.gov/pressoffice/pr/expedited-dib-process-pr.html>

NOTICE: Links to archived copies of this and other mailing list messages, subscribe \unsubscribe instructions and other useful information for active duty, retirees and veterans, and their families, are available on the LINKS FOR MIL\RET\VETS website at [www.hostmtb.org](http://www.hostmtb.org)

## **AGENT ORANGE CHANGES: ATTENTION ALL VIETNAM VETERANS AND WIDOWS OF**

VIETNAM VETERANS - If you set foot in VN between 1962 to 1975 you and/or your widow may be eligible for compensation for the 3 new diseases attributable to Agent Orange. They are ischemic heart disease (also known as coronary heart disease); Parkinson's disease; and B-cell leukemia. You should file a service disability claim if you are suffering from any of these diseases. If you are a widow you should also file a claim if your husband's death was either caused by, or linked to, one of the 3 diseases. Then you need to file a claim for Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and burial expenses of \$2,000. See below listed VA Agent Orange related information or .CLICK HERE

<<http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/>> for further details. (SOURCE: Barksdale AFB Retiree Activities Office News Item at <http://www.raobafb.com/Pages/default.aspx>)

ORLANDO, FLA. — The Air Force's next-generation tanker has a new name, the service's chief of staff announced Thursday.

Gen. Mark Welsh announced that the KC-46A has been dubbed **"Pegasus"** during his keynote address at the Air Force Association's Air Warfare Symposium in Orlando, Fla

"It's a proud name," Welsh said. "I had a chance to see the first airplane on the assembly line a few weeks back. It will be flying in June. It's a real thing now."

The KC-46A is one of the big three recapitalization programs the Air Force has acted to protect in the budget, alongside the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and new long-range strike bomber. The tanker program will produce 179 new planes to replace the aging KC-135 tanker fleet, with 18 tankers delivered by 2017 and completion of production in 2027.

## **Tricare Prime Update**

Split enrollment allows eligible family members who do not live with their sponsor to enroll in TRICARE Prime as long as they reside in an area where TRICARE Prime is available. Split enrollment is especially helpful for families with college students, children living with former spouses or families that are otherwise separated. Children who are TRICARE-eligible based on their sponsor's status remain eligible until reaching age 21 (or age 23 if enrolled in a full-time course of study at an approved institution of higher learning, and if the sponsor provides at least 50 percent of the financial support). Your college student's TRICARE Prime coverage ends if his or her Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) record is not updated before reaching age 21

For information on extending benefits for your college student, refer to <http://www.tricare.mil/deers>

To use split enrollment, complete and sign a TRICARE Prime Enrollment Application and PCM Change Form (DD Form 2876). Send the form to the family member's new regional contractor at:

\* North Region: Health Net Federal Services, LLC, P.O. Box 870143, Surfside Beach, SC 29587-9743

\* South Region: Humana Military Healthcare Services, Inc., Attn: PNC Bank, P.O. Box 105838, Atlanta, GA 30348-5838

\* West Region: TriWest Healthcare Alliance, P.O. Box 43590, Phoenix, AZ 85080-3590

The form should be sent within 30 days of the move. You must notify each family member's regional contractor of the split enrollment status and establish one family enrollment fee, if applicable. TRICARE Prime enrollments follow the "20th of the month rule." Applications received by your regional contractor by the 20th of the month will become effective at the beginning of the following month (e.g., an enrollment received by Dec. 20 would become effective Jan. 1). If the application is received after the 20th of the month, coverage will become effective on the first day of the month following the next month (e.g., an enrollment received on 27 DEC would become effective on 1 FEB).

To use the split enrollment option, you must notify the regional contractor in each region to establish a primary payer, usually the sponsor, if you pay enrollment fees. If your child enrolls separately in TRICARE Prime after arriving at college, and no other family members are enrolled in TRICARE Prime, it is considered

a single enrollment. If the child enrolls and there are other family members enrolled elsewhere, your TRICARE Prime family enrollment fee remains the same. Your regional contractors will coordinate enrollment fees and billing statements. Student enrollment in TRICARE Prime is automatically renewed after one year, unless the renewal offer is declined. An unpaid enrollment fee will cause the entire family to be disenrolled. A 12-month lockout will result if you have been disenrolled for non-payment.

Except for emergencies, your family member must receive care from his or her assigned primary care manager (PCM). A uniformed services identification card helps provide proof of coverage, and the TRICARE Prime enrollment card should be shown at the time of care. PCMs must provide specialty care referrals to avoid using the TRICARE Prime point-of service (POS)\* option, which results in higher costs. If your child does not continue enrollment in TRICARE Prime, he or she will be automatically covered by TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra as long as his or her DEERS information is current. Visit [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil) if you have questions about using TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra. After “aging out” of TRICARE coverage under the sponsor, adult children, until reaching age 26, may be eligible to extend TRICARE coverage by purchasing TRICARE Young Adult, a premium-based health care plan. Visit <http://www.tricare.mil/tya> for more information.

[Source: TRICARE Health Matters Fall 2011]

### **Think your old?**

Survey found that only 21% of Americans aged 65 to 74 say that they feel old. Even among people over 75, only 35% call themselves old. In another study, Harvard University researchers surveyed Americans aged between 55 and 74 and found that the average person in this age group feels 12 years younger than their age. Older people also indicate that they are significantly happier than their middle-aged selves according to a surprising study that was reported about in The Economist. The researchers found that when you look across a person's whole lifespan, their overall happiness tends to have U-bend trajectory, with young people and older people tending to be happiest and middle-age often being a lower point. Interestingly, the researchers said that this type of pattern...

### **Returning Vets and VA**

VA has personnel stationed at major military hospitals to help seriously injured Servicemembers returning from Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, and New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND) as they transition from military to civilian life. OEF/OIF Servicemembers who have questions about VA benefits or need assistance in filing a VA claim or accessing services can contact the nearest VA office or call 1-800-827-1000.

### **TRICARE Vaccine Program:**

You may receive any of the vaccines listed below for zero copayment at participating retail network pharmacies.

- To find a participating pharmacy, search online <<http://www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE/pharmacy/>> or call 1-877-363-1303.
- Call the pharmacy first to:
  - o - verify the days and times you can come in for a vaccine.
  - o - see if there are any restrictions.
  - o - make sure the pharmacy has the vaccine you need as some, such as shingles, may be in short supply.
  - o - make sure a pharmacist gives the vaccines and not a provider from an in-pharmacy clinic to avoid potential cost shares or copayments.

- If there are restrictions or if the vaccine is not available, you may still go to your doctor for the vaccine. You may have to pay copayments or cost shares for the office visit or other services received during the office visit  
To learn more about vaccines program please visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) <<http://www.cdc.gov/>>

### **VA Announces \$300 Million in New Grants to Help End Veterans' Homelessness:**

- Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced the award of nearly \$300 million in grants that will help approximately 120,000 homeless and at-risk Veterans and their families. The grants have been awarded to 319 community agencies in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. <<http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2448>.  
(7/13/13)

### **Fully Developed Claims: What Is a Fully Developed Claim?**

The Fully Developed Claims (FDC) program is an optional new initiative that offers Veterans, Service members and survivors faster decisions from VA on compensation, pension, and survivor benefit claims.

Veterans, Service members and survivors simply submit all required records and documentation at the time they make their claim and certify that they have no further evidence. VA can then review and process the claim more quickly.

Many Types of Claims

There are many types of claims for disability compensation. For example, if you're filing a VA claim for the very first time, you have an original claim. A reopened claim means you have new and material evidence and you want VA to reconsider a claim it once denied. There are also new claims, secondary claims, and special claims

To learn more about which type of claim you may have and the evidence and forms you need with your submission, view the Claims and Evidence

<[http://www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/fdc\\_checklist.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/fdc_checklist.asp)> page. Your claim must meet all the applicable requirements listed to be considered for the FDC program.

### **TRICARE Retiree Dental Program Contractor:**

The TRICARE Retiree Dental Program contractor is Delta Dental. You can sign up online <[https://www.ddfgptoolkits.com/ipWeb/appmanager/ct/desktop?\\_nfpb=true&\\_pageLabel=ct\\_home\\_page](https://www.ddfgptoolkits.com/ipWeb/appmanager/ct/desktop?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=ct_home_page)> with Delta Dental to:

View benefits:

Manage enrollment

Add or delete family members

Make a payment

Track your claims

Dental Coverage:

The TRICARE Retiree Dental Program covers:

Exams, cleanings, fluorides, sealants, and x-rays

Fillings

Root canals

Gum surgery

Oral surgery and extractions

Crowns and dentures:

Orthodontics

You can see a full list of benefits at [www.trdp.org](http://www.trdp.org) <<http://www.trdp.org/>> .

Contact Delta Dental; Stateside: 1-888-838-8737 ; Overseas: (AT&T USADirect Access Number)  
+ 866-721-8737

### **The Survivors Pension benefit:**

Survivors Benefit which may also be referred to as Death Pension, is a tax-free monetary benefit payable to a low-income, un-remarried surviving spouse and/or unmarried child(ren) of a deceased Veteran with wartime service.

#### **Eligibility**

The deceased Veteran must have met the following service requirements:

- For service on or before September 7, 1980, the Veteran must have served at least 90 days of active military service, with at least one day during a war time period.
  - If he or she entered active duty after September 7, 1980, generally he or she must have served at least 24 months or the full period for which called or ordered to active duty with at least one day during a war time period.
  - Was discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions.
- Survivors Pension is also based on your yearly family income, which must be less than the amount set by Congress to qualify.

While an un-remarried spouse is eligible at any age, a child of a deceased wartime Veteran must be:

- Under 18, OR
- Under age 23 if attending a VA-approved school, OR
- Permanently incapable of self-support due to a disability before age 18

Your yearly family income must be less than the amount set by Congress to qualify for the Survivors Pension benefit. Learn more about income and net worth limitation, and see an example of how VA calculates the Survivors Pension benefit.

#### **How to Apply**

To apply for Survivors Pension, download and complete VA Form 21-534EZ, “Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits” and mail it to your local regional benefit office. You can locate your local regional benefit office using the VA Facility Locator. You may also visit your local regional benefit office and turn in your application for processing.

You must send the completed application and any copies of other documents to the VA regional office that serves your area of residence

### **Better Business Bureau Warns Of “One Ring” Scam Leaving People With Higher Cell Phone Bills Also Warns Of \$9.84 Charges On Credit Cards Statements**

The Better Business Bureau is warning cell phone users about two new scams.

The first can add unauthorized charges to consumers' monthly wireless bills.

The scam has been dubbed the “one ring” scam because victims' phones often ring only once before the call is disconnected. If a victim tries to return the call, they are charged a \$19.95 international call fee plus \$9 a minute for the duration of the call.

Victims have told BBB that the calls appear to come from Caribbean nations including Grenada, Antigua, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica or the British Virgin Islands.

Area codes for the calls include 268, 274, 473, 809 and 876. However, some calls may be domestic.

BBB advises consumers to take note of the phone number the calls come from and notify their cell phone carriers immediately if they believe they have been victims of the scam. By documenting the fraud, consumers may have a better chance of getting the charges removed.

The practice of third parties placing unauthorized charges on wireless accounts is called “cramming.” The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) have reviewed

thousands of cramming complaints, and they expect more. For more on cramming from the FTC visit:<http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0183-mystery-phone-charges>.

BBB recommends that if you receive a call displaying an unfamiliar out-of-state telephone number on your caller ID, ignore the call and do not call back. Check your wireless bills carefully and inform your carrier if you spot any unauthorized charges.

BBB tips for avoiding cell phone fraud include:

- When in doubt, don't pick up or call back. If you don't recognize an out-of-state telephone number on your caller ID, ignore it. Once the caller hangs up, you can always put the number into a web search engine to see if it is actually someone you need to call back.
- Understand your mobile bill. Be sure to keep track of what services you pay for, that way you will be able to determine if any charges are unauthorized.
- Keep a close eye on monthly statements. Anyone can become a victim of bill cramming. Monitoring your bill is the best way to determine whether or not you've been affected. The sooner you spot any unexpected charges, the sooner you can stop them.
- Add restrictions to your account. Contact your service provider to see if you can restrict third-party billing on your account.
- Inform other users on your mobile phone plan. It's important to let other friends and family members on your cell phone plan know about this scam, and to ignore phone numbers they do not recognize.

### **The second scam involves credit cards.**

In the wake of all the various data breaches happening lately, Better Business Bureau is warning consumers to watch their statements extra carefully. Scammers are using stolen information to do small charges on credit cards, and are counting on the fact that many consumers don't check their credit card statements all that carefully. One popular number to charge right now is \$9.84. Therefore, be sure to review your recent statements for unexplained charges of any amount, and contest them with your bank or credit card issuer by calling the number found on the back of your card or billing statement.

#### **How the Scam Works**

You spot a recent strange charge of \$9.84 on your credit card statement. The source listed on your bill is an unfamiliar website. You check out the web address, and it's not the business website. It's a generic landing page that claims to offer "Customer Support." The text promises to "refund 100% of your last payment" and provides a phone number and email address.

It turns out though that scammers are charging stolen credit card numbers for a small amount of money. This way scammers are "testing the water" and making sure the card works before they try to charge even bigger amounts or even max out your credit altogether. Recent victims were charged \$9.84, but scammers may change that amount as word gets out. The expectation is that many cardholders won't notice the relatively small charge, and the credit card companies won't go after such a minor sum.

Victims report calling the "customer support" site, and received verbal confirmation that the charge would be canceled. However, do not take the scammers at their word. Contact your bank to report the charges and request a new credit card. Your card information has been compromised, and it is likely scammers will be back for more.

Better Business Bureau offers the following tips to reduce your risk of credit card fraud:

- Report lost cards and incorrect charges promptly. In the United States and Canada if your credit card is lost, stolen, or used without your permission, you may be responsible for up to \$50. If you report the loss before the card is used, you are not responsible for any unauthorized charges. In addition, many cardholders are protected by zero liability policies set in place by credit card companies.
- Request a new card if you notice unauthorized charges. Fraudulent charges mean your card information has been compromised. Be on the safe side and request a new card.
- Never lend your card. And do not leave your cards, statements and receipts lying around your home, car or office.
- Never sign a blank charge slip. Draw lines through blank spaces on charge slips above the total so the amount can't be changed.

- Use caution when ordering online or over the phone. Always be cautious about disclosing your account number on the telephone or online unless you know the person you are dealing with represents a reputable company.

Visit <http://bbb.org> for more tips on avoiding scams. And for the latest happenings, tips, and scam alerts from your local BBB, visit BBB's Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/BBBTNGA](http://www.facebook.com/BBBTNGA), and on Twitter:

@BBBTNGA

/Better-Business-Bureau-Warns-Of-One.aspx

### **AGENT ORANGE CHANGES: ATTENTION ALL VIETNAM VETERANS AND WIDOWS OF VIETNAM VETERANS –**

If you set foot in VN between 1962 to 1975 you and/or your widow may be eligible for compensation for the 3 new diseases attributable to Agent Orange. They are ischemic heart disease (also known as coronary heart disease); Parkinson's disease; and B-cell leukemia. You should file a service disability claim if you are suffering from any of these diseases. If you are a widow you should also file a claim if your husband's death was either caused by, or linked to, one of the 3 diseases. Then you need to file a claim for Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and burial expenses of \$2,000. See below listed VA Agent Orange related information or .CLICK HERE <<http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/>> for further details. (SOURCE: Barksdale AFB Retiree Activities Office News Item at <http://www.raobafb.com/Pages/default.aspx>)

### **Upon the Death of a Military Retiree or Surviving Spouse:**

It will help to have the retiree's DD214 handy to supply Social Security number and other info to DFAS .

**\*Notify the Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS):** - (800)321-1080, upon death of retiree or surviving spouse.

\* Send **copy** of Death Certificate to DFAS which indicates cause of death to:

**For the Retiree:** DFAS, U.S. Military Retirement Pay, P.O. 7130, London, KY 40742-7130

**Coast Guard or Annuitant,** call 1-800-772-8724, or 785-3393415

**For Annuitants:** DFAS, P.O. Box 7131, London, KY, 40742-7131

DFAS will take steps to close out the Pay account to prevent any overpayments. If the decedent was an enrollee in the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) and or the Retired Service Man's Family Protection Plan(RSFPP), they will take additional steps to initiate pay accounts for eligible survivors.

**Designated beneficiaries of retirees** Should expect a Standard Form 1174 (SF-1174) and if applicable, SBP/RSFPP, related forms in the mail within seven to ten business days for action.

### **Additionally: Notify**

- Social Security (SSA) – (800) 772-1213
- Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) (800) 538-9552
- Receiving Disability Compensation or Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC), notify
- Dept of Veterans Affairs(DVA) (800)827-1000
- If Civil Servant/retired civil servant, call Personnel Management (OPM) 888-767-6738.
- If enrolled in DVA-sponsored Life Insurance National Service Life Insurance (NSLI), or Servicemembers' Group Life insurance (SGLI), call them at (800) 669-8477.

### **TRICARE Service Center Walk-In Service Ending**

Walk-in service is ending at TRICARE Service Centers in the U.S. by April 1, 2014.

- TRICARE Service Centers are customer service outlets that are operated by our regional Contractors.
- They are usually located in military hospitals and clinics.

- Because our overseas areas are unique, walk-in service at TRICARE Service Centers in all overseas areas <<http://www.tricare.mil/ContactUs/TSC/Overseas.aspx>> will continue.
  - To get your questions answered in the U.S., you'll no longer walk-in during limited hours. Instead:
    - Go online, anytime—learn about your online customer service options <<http://www.tricare.mil/ContactUs/Login.aspx>>
    - Call <<http://www.tricare.mil/ContactUs/CallUs.aspx>> toll-free
    - Try our mobile apps (see [http://www.tricare.mil/LiveWell/HLArticles/Archives/10\\_16\\_13\\_TRICAREMobile](http://www.tricare.mil/LiveWell/HLArticles/Archives/10_16_13_TRICAREMobile))
    - View News Article: "TRICARE Ends Walk-in Admin Services at 189 Facilities" <<http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=121473>> "
- This change does not affect any TRICARE benefits or health care services.

### **VA Removes Annual Income Reporting Requirement Eliminates Burden on Veterans, Improves Customer Service**

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is eliminating the annual requirement for most Veterans enrolled in VA's health care system to report income information beginning in March 2014. Instead, VA will automatically match income information obtained from the Internal Revenue Service and Social Security Administration.

"Eliminating the requirement for annual income reporting makes our health care benefits easier for Veterans to obtain," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "This change will reduce the burden on Veterans, improve customer service and make it much easier for Veterans to keep their health care eligibility up-to-date."

- Some Veterans applying for enrollment for the first time are still required to submit income information.
  - There is no change in VA's long-standing policy to provide no-cost care to indigent Veterans, Veterans with catastrophic medical conditions, Veterans with a disability rating of 50 percent or higher, or for conditions that are officially rated as "service-connected."
  - VA encourages Veterans to continue to use the health benefits renewal form to report changes in their personal information, such as address, phone numbers, dependents, next of kin, income and health insurance
- NOTE: People wishing to receive e-mail from VA with the latest news releases and updated fact sheets can For more information, visit [www.va.gov/healthbenefits/cost](http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/cost) or call VA toll-free at 1-877-222-VETS (8387).

### **Explanation of Burn Pits from VA Secretary**

Veterans Affairs Secretary Erik Shinseki was asked why his agency is nearly three months late in creating a legally mandated registry of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans potentially poisoned — some lethally — by exposure to burn-pits of toxic trash. The "burn pits," scattered throughout Iraq and Afghanistan, spewed acrid smoke while breaking down damaged Humvees, ordnance, mattresses, rocket launchers, and even amputated body parts. Some were ignited by jet fuel. Perhaps the largest such dump was in Balad, Iraq, spanning the length of 10 football fields.

On Jan. 10, 2013, President Obama signed a law giving the VA one year to create and maintain the Open Air Burn Pit Registry, meant to identify and monitor veterans who were exposed to the pollutants. The VA also was directed to report its findings to Congress.

"While the necessity for some delay is understandable, the VA has failed to adequately explain why the delay has occurred, which steps remain to be completed before the registry is available for the use of our veterans, and provide specific information on when the registry is expected to be completed. This delay is deeply concerning. The registry's launch has been postponed to "spring 2014" to allow "adequate time" to develop and test the system's software and hardware as well as to ensure data security and accessibility, said VA spokeswoman Victoria Dillon.

Once the index goes live, veterans can join without being enrolled in VA health care, Dillon said, adding the agency "encourages all veterans who served in Iraq, Afghanistan, Djibouti, and the Gulf War to participate." They can sign up now for personal log-ons.

Meanwhile, veterans groups are unsure how many troops were exposed or have fallen ill due to inhaling the vapors. A private, veteran-run website, BurnPits360.org, lists 16 Iraq and Afghanistan vets who served near the dumps and later died from a variety of cancers and lung ailments ...subscribe to the VA Office of Public Affairs Distribution List <[http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/opa\\_listserv.asp](http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/opa_listserv.asp)>  
SOURCE: VA News Release at <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2531>  
NOTICE: Links to archived copies of this and other mailing list messages, subscribe \unsubscribe instructions and other useful information for active duty, retirees and veterans, and their families, are available on the LINKS FOR MIL\RET\VETS website at [www.hostmtb.org](http://www.hostmtb.org)

### **'Atomic Troops' Eligible for Benefits**

Week of March 31, 2014

Since 1990, the Department of Justice has operated a compensation program for eligible veterans who took part as service members in any above-ground atomic testing from 1945 to 1962.

Under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) program, on-site participants in the testing can receive one-time payments of \$75,000, while miners/ore transporters can get \$100,000 apiece. Veterans are eligible for RECA benefits if they were exposed to radiation and subsequently contracted illnesses covered by the program, including lymphomas (other than Hodgkin's Disease) and several varieties of cancer.

If an eligible veteran is deceased, the spouse, parents, children and/or grandchildren may be eligible for benefits.

For more information, visit the DOJ RECA webpage <http://www.justice.gov/civil/common/reca.html> .

Download an Onsite Participant Claim Form

<[http://www.justice.gov/civil/docs\\_forms/RECA\\_Onsite\\_Particip.pdf](http://www.justice.gov/civil/docs_forms/RECA_Onsite_Particip.pdf)> .

Contact RECA by e-mail at [Civil.RECA@usdoj.gov](mailto:Civil.RECA@usdoj.gov) <<mailto:civil.reca@usdoj.gov>>

SOURCE: Military.Com news release at <http://www.military.com/veterans-report/atomic-troops-eligible-for-benefits?ESRC=vr.nl>

-- <http://www.veteransresources.org> (PDF & HTML Editions w/ATTACHMENTS)

'Atomic Troops' Eligible for Benefits

### **Social Security launches expedited veteran disability process:**

March 18, 2014 WASHINGTON (AFNS) --

Social Security claims from veterans with a Veterans Affairs Department disability compensation rating of 100 percent permanent and total have a new process that will treat their applications as high priority and issue expedited decisions.

Carolyn W. Colvin, the acting Social Security commissioner, said the new process is similar to the way the agency currently handles disability claims from wounded warriors.

To receive the expedited service, veterans must tell Social Security they have a VA disability compensation rating of 100 percent permanent and total and must show proof of their disability rating with their VA notification letter.

The VA rating only expedites Social Security disability claims processing and does not guarantee an approval for Social Security disability benefits, officials emphasized, noting that these veterans still must meet the strict eligibility requirements for a disability allowance. (Courtesy of Social Security Administration)

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Eliminates Burden on Veterans, Improves Customer Service

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VA encourages Veterans to continue to use the health benefits renewal form to report changes in their personal information, such as address, phone numbers, dependents, next of kin, income and health insurance.

For more information, visit [www.va.gov/healthbenefits/cost](http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/cost) or call VA toll-free at 1-877-222—8387.

### **TRICARE Emergency Care ► ER or Urgent Care Decision:**

When we're in pain or sick, we're anxious and it can be hard to think straight. We want relief as soon as possible. When a child is hurt or ill, the anxiety can be even greater. In those moments, it is can be hard to determine if you need to go to the emergency room or if an urgent care center will do. It's important to make that distinction because making the wrong choice will cost both time and money. The general rule of thumb for TRICARE beneficiaries is that if a condition is threatening to life, limb or eyesight, it is considered an emergency and a trip to the emergency room is warranted. TRICARE defines an emergency department as an organized, hospital-based facility available 24 hours a day providing emergency services to patients who need immediate medical attention. Emergency departments affiliated with a hospital are most likely TRICARE-authorized providers. Beneficiaries and their families will get the appropriate level of care and save money by having urgent care needs met in urgent care facilities.

Over the last two decades, over 9,000 urgent care centers have emerged across the country and this may lead to more urgent care facilities in an area than emergency rooms. However, beneficiaries who seek care at an urgent care facility need to ask if it is affiliated with a hospital-based emergency department. If it isn't, the beneficiary will need to make a decision about getting care elsewhere or being responsible for those facility charges. Beneficiaries can check if a provider is TRICARE-authorized by calling their regional contractor. Contact information for regional contractors is available at [www.tricare.mil/callus](http://www.tricare.mil/callus). Learn more about emergency care under TRICARE at [www.tricare.mil/emergency](http://www.tricare.mil/emergency). [Source: Tricare News 26 Feb 2014]

### **Luncheon Welcome:**

A welcome addition for locals wanting to spend a pleasant afternoon. If you're looking for an informative and interesting afternoon...you can attend a MOAA luncheon at the Tides, for MOAA members non-members .

Held every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday each month, starting at 11:45 am. Call for reservations 321-453-2947...no later than the Thursday prior to date of luncheon. Call for menu and who and what speakers are scheduled for that day.

In the dawns early light: Honor Flight connects past with present

by Capt. Erin Dorrance  
45th Space Wing Public Affairs

4/23/2014 - PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. -- Imagine being 93 years old and still doing more by 9 a.m. than most people do all day. That phrase has long been a military motto; and is as true now as ever.

Local World War II and Korean War veterans headed off to Washington D.C. in true hero fashion, as part of the Honor Flight program, where a crowd of roaring military personnel, volunteers, elected officials and family members sent them off in the early morning hours April 12.

"I'm excited to make the trip," said retired Navy Chief Aviation Machinist Mate I Clarence "Bud" Lane, who served in the Navy from 1941 to 1946. "But more importantly, I will spend the day remembering all of the people who didn't make it back."

Lane was just one of 25 veterans who participated in the 20th trip organized and planned by the Space Coast Honor Flight chapter. The Honor Flight program was conceived by retired Air Force Capt. Earl Morse, who was surprised that many WWII veterans had never been to Washington D.C. to see their war memorial. Morse took the first Honor Flight participants from Ohio in May of 2005, and since then, the program has seen tremendous growth throughout the United States.

The day begins at 2 a.m. when attendees report for duty, followed by a pep rally that motivates the crowd before they board a bus at 4 a.m. headed to Orlando International Airport. On this trip there were 21 WWII veterans, four Korean War veterans, and one female veteran on the flight. The oldest veteran was 93 years old, according to retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Bill Welser, Space Coast Honor Flight group president.

The flight landed at Baltimore-Washington International Airport to a receiving line of supporters who waved flags and hand-made signs welcoming the veterans to their nation's capital. Veterans toured the U.S. Air Force Memorial, war memorials, and Arlington Cemetery. After an emotional day, the veterans returned to a welcome home party at Wickham Park Senior Center in Melbourne, Fla., later that same evening.

"Captain America was released in theaters this weekend, but why go see a movie about a mythical WWII comic book soldier when you can see and meet our nation's real heroes right here," said Col. Robert J. Pavelko, 45th Space Wing vice commander, who addressed the large crowd at the send off event. It is truly a humbling experience to be in a room filled with this much history and I thank each and every one of you for your service."

An estimated 640 WWII veterans die each day. The Honor Flight's goal is to take as many WWII veterans as possible. Subsequent to WWII veterans, the Honor Flight also fills their flights with Korean War, and then Vietnam veterans. There is no cost to the veterans because Honor Flight is a non-profit organization funded by donations.

"Our biggest challenge is finding WWII veterans," Welser said. "Spreading the word helps ensure that we meet our goal of giving every WWII veteran the chance to take an Honor Flight."

For more information on the Space Coast Honor Flight program, visit [www.SpaceCoastHonorFlight.org](http://www.SpaceCoastHonorFlight.org) or visit the parent program's page [www.HonorFlight.org](http://www.HonorFlight.org).

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